

"Vitality shows in not only the ability to persist but the ability to start over."

Sept 14, 2007

Qingdao No.1 International School of Shandong

Big Ideas and Practices Behind the Program

Director: Jeffrey Fischmann

The purpose of the QISS educational program can be summarized by our theme: Develop a Mindful Heart. Our mission statement further articulates our theme: To provide a rigorous academic program that develops the core characteristics of vitality, courage, sensitivity, intelligence and compassion.

Our mission statement is more fully developed by our Expected Student Learning Results (ESLRs) which are: 1) to provide a strong academic program as measured by standards and benchmarks; 2) to develop independent learners; 3) to develop the ability to collaborate in diverse groups; 4) to develop IT proficiency; 5) to develop the core characteristics of vitality, courage, sensitivity, intelligence and compassion.

As a practical matter, our theme, mission, and ESLRs are taught through our Four Pillars of Practice which place emphasis upon: 1) students demonstrating their skill development in the core academic disciplines, especially their communication skills; 2)

relevant learning experiences that develop important life skills; 3) students developing critical thinking skills through ample reflection, analysis and synthesis; 4) students are engaged in community building activities that develop their social conscience. All of our students will be required to complete between 15 -20 Key Assignments, such as

multiple speeches, debates, writing projects, IT presentations, and dramatic performances.

We encourage all parents to attend as many of their child's Key Assignments as they can. This is the best way to see what your children are actually learning.



Seek First to Understand

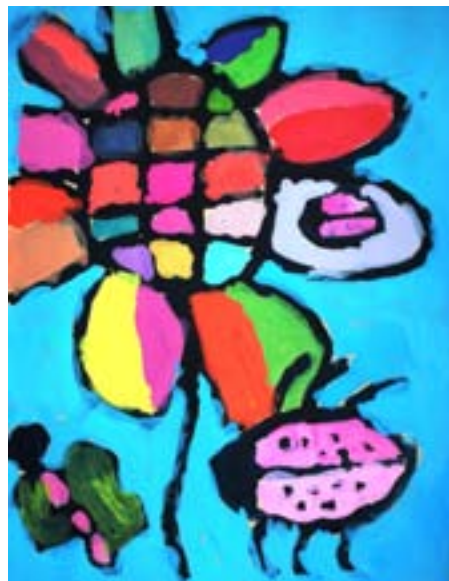
Upper School Principal: Peter Burnside

Dear Parents,

What makes your child wonderful in your eyes? What makes you proud of your child? What are one or two ways you would like to see your child grow or improve this year? What else would you like your child's teachers to know or understand about your child?

We have prepared the above "homework" questions for you because we want to understand you and your child better. Your child is bringing home today

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Amy

What's the Big Deal about Key Assignments?

Lower School Principal: Tim Green



Whether you're a relatively new member to our school community, or an 'old timer,' you've probably heard your child or one

of our teachers mention the Key Assignments. You have probably heard about them more than once, as your children are involved in producing them

(18, to be exact, in the Lower School) throughout the year. What are they exactly? And why are they deemed so important? I will try to provide you with a basic explanation, which will inevitably lead to some educational jargon and concepts, which, by the end of this article, I hope will clarify more than befuddle.

So what are Key Assignments? Key Assignments are relevant, performance based learning activities that require students to demonstrate their skills and abilities - rather

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Questions or Concerns	Contact	Tel
Attendance	Cady Lu (Chinese and English)	8890-8867
Transcripts and Records	Julia Zhu (Chinese and English)	8890-8867
Admissions	David Addicott (English)	8890-9801
Korean Translation	Grace Kim (Chinese and Korean)	8890-8867
Questions about student illness or to report a special medical need	Kathy Fischmann (Chinese and English)	8890-8867
General information or to contact a teacher. Contact our main office. If we cannot answer your question, we will have someone return your call as soon as possible.	Main office (Chinese, English or Korean)	8890-8867

Lower School Principal (continued)

than simply providing memorized, rote answers that take little in-depth thought and are usually forgotten by the time the day is over. Key Assignments are designed to close the gap between school lessons and meaningful skills needed in every day, real life. Strong projects encourage students at every grade level to reflect upon past experiences and learning, analyze different approaches for solving problems, and synthesize concepts from what they have learned.

Current research has shown that educational programs that focus on meaningful instruction (often referred to as "authentic instruction") are more likely to instill in students the lifelong critical thinking skills that build a basis for future learning and enable students to evaluate what they learn both in and outside the classroom. In addition, when authentic instruction is incorporated into the classroom, isolated topics from the lesson are connected to the real world, which makes it easier for students to visualize and understand what they are learning. And of course, authentic instruction makes it all more meaningful because the lessons relate to real-life endeavors, capsulated through

the performance of Key Assignments. Authentic instruction via Key Assignments motivate students to invest in the hard work that learning requires, more so than traditional schooling that relies on repeated drills aimed at disconnected knowledge and skills. Through the Key Assignments, teachers convey high expectations for all students, including that it is necessary to take risks and try hard to master challenging academic work; that all members of the class can learn important knowledge and skills, and that a climate of mutual respect among all students contributes to achievement by all. "Mutual respect" means that students with less skill or proficiency in a subject are treated in ways that encourage their efforts and value their contributions.

What do Key Assignments look like?

All Lower School students are required to complete 3 speeches, 3 written reports, 3 stories, 3 debates, 3 dramatic performances, and 3 presentations.

How are Key Assignments scored?

Over the past two years, our teachers have been actively involved in creating rubrics (measuring and scoring guides



used in subjective assessments) to evaluate student progress by grade level and by each Key Assignment.

Well, that's it in a nutshell, as they say. Please

feel free to discuss your child's Key Assignments with either myself or your child's teacher. In the near future, Lower School teachers will send you a schedule of grade level Key Assignments, providing you with specific times and dates they will be performed. You are indeed invited to attend these important functions!

ABC DEFG



Ariel L.

A lot has been happening in the ESL-department!

ESL Specialist: Liesbeth Beullens

During the first two weeks of school, all lower school students took the baseline tests. These are tests that help us determine each student's current academic level. Based on the scores, we can put the students in the right group and figure out how much support they each need.

For grades 1 and 2, there are three ESL-periods per day. The first one is during

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The new school logo will be announced soon!

Join us at the International Picnic!



Natalee Mae



Hye Min

ESL-department! (continued)

Language Arts. Students in need of ESL are pulled out and get on-level instruction. The second period is in the afternoon, when other students take Chinese class. During this section they will focus on any language issues occurring in the morning. The last one is Differentiated Learning, during which the whole class will focus on reading, writing, and study skills. The ESL-teacher will support the students in class. For grades 3, 4, and 5, there are five ESL-periods per day. In addition to the Language Arts, Language Support and Differentiated Learning, as in grade 1 and 2, these students will also receive in-class language support during Social Studies and Science, and during Math.

We are in the process of hiring two more ESL teachers. In the meantime, we are working hard to make sure every student gets all the help he or she needs. We will update you again soon regarding our staffing.

Upper School Principal (continued)

information about our parent conferences on September 19 and 20. Please check the time that we have scheduled for you. We hope you can make it so that we may learn more about you and your child, and develop a lasting relationship that will help your child succeed.

Habit #5 in Stephen Covey's book, "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People", is

"Seek first to understand, then be understood". This habit is especially important in an international environment where cultural and language differences can often lead to misunderstandings. Please help us understand you and your child by attending the parent conference next week.



International Picnic Reminder

Kindergarten Teacher: Amanda Olson

Thank you to all the families who have returned the form for the International picnic. If you have not yet returned the form to the school please do so by Monday, September 17.

The International picnic committee would like to ask that those of you who

have said "Yes" to donating a prize for the raffle to please send the prize with the donating family name/company name attached to the prize. If you could please have your donation sent to the school by Wednesday, September 19 we would greatly appreciate it. This would help tremendously in getting the donations/prizes prepared for the raffle by the student government. If you are going to be bringing your donated prize on the day of the picnic please make sure you have placed the name of the family/company that is donating it and give to one of the student government representatives at the raffle ticket table when you get to the picnic.

If you would like to volunteer to help set up for the picnic or if you have any questions about the picnic please email me. My email address is msolson25@hotmail.com

Thank you for your time and support,
International Picnic Committee
Amanda Olson-Chair
Maggie Lu, Linden Bentley, Jeff Albaugh,
Dean Leonard, Cynthia Fernandes,
Bill Stubbs & QISS Student Government



So Hyun



Zion

September & October

Sept. 17	Teacher Inservice (Half day of school)
19-20	Parent/Teacher Conferences
22	International Picnic
27	PAC meeting at school 10:30-11:30am
28	L.S. & U.S. Progress Reports
Oct. 1-5	National Day Holiday
22	Inservice (1/2 Day School)
26	End of First Quarter

Please email your concerns or advice to any of our faculty at the email addresses listed below.

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Arnold, Bradley	Computer Teacher	leybrad@gmail.com
Arnold, Mal	Library and Computer Teacher	mal.ca@mac.com
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Zhu, Yan (Julia)	Office (student records)	juliaqis@hotmail.com



*The Open House
was a success!*

